

**SEMINOLE COUNTY
PARKS & PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
NATURAL LANDS SUBCOMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING September 24, 2014**

ATTENDANCE:

Members:

Tom Boyko, Barbara Whittier
David Williamson, Ed Ghiglieri

Staff:

Jim Duby
Lori Hartsock

LOCATION:

Geneva Wilderness Area

TIME:

8:00 a.m.

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. at the Ed Yarborough Nature Center. The minutes for the May 2014 meeting were approved.

Old Business:

Youth Conservation Center - Mr. Duby gave the group a brief overview of the status of the Seminole County Youth Conservation Center. He stated that staff would be presenting several options to the BCC at the Oct. 14, 2014 BCC (correction (Oct. 28th) meeting. These will include the use of the Boars Nest, Private Parcels or the Geneva Wilderness Area as the central hub of facilities and the use of nearby satellite sites for other related programming. Jim addressed several questions regarding the funding of this project through the Natural Lands Bond Fund and the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission stating that the Natural Lands Fund had approximately \$1.5 million available for land purchase and or capital improvements and that FWC had funds to supply the center with equipment such as fishing gear, archery supplies etc... but did not have capital funds available at this time.

Natural Lands Enhancement Projects – Jim provided information on the current status of these three projects. He explained that the Lake Harney Wilderness Area observation tower footers were held up due to high water levels and that staff was working with the Engineer and Contractor for an alternative method. Jim explained that the first section of boardwalk at the Black Bear Wilderness Area is complete and the crew is working on breach #12 at this time. A short tour was conducted of the Geneva Pavilion which has a slab and block walls installed and the Fishing Pier which is complete.

Wetlands Room Update - Ms. Hartsock provided a walking tour of the Nature Center's wetlands room so the group could see the most recent work by contractor and artisan Eric McCarty. Lori also described phase two which will include an aquatic turtle habitat as well as improvements to aquarium framing and mud floor coverings. It was also discussed that staff would like to eventually do something very similar in the main room of the nature center and that this subcommittee could be involved in brain storming session.

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NEW BUSINESS:

Jim informed the committee that next year (2015) would be the 25th anniversary of the Natural Lands Program and this would be a good topic for a future agenda item. Dependent on completion of enhancement projects the “celebration” might be in the spring or fall.

Fright Hike Update – Due to a “West Nile Advisory” issued by the Health Department and the positive test results from several chickens in the Sentinel Flock at Geneva Wilderness Area, the Fright Hike and other night time activities may be cancelled until further notice.

Project Tours – The group ended the meeting with a visit to the Geneva Wilderness Area pavilion and fishing pier. Staff described the structures and future plans for incorporating these facilities into Natural Lands Program programming.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

The October meeting time and location is to be determined at a later date.